

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

IN RECOGNITION OF THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE CENTER FOR BELGIAN CULTURE OF THE QUAD CITIES

HON. CHERI BUSTOS

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mrs. BUSTOS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Center for Belgian Culture of the Quad Cities on the occasion of their 50th Anniversary.

The Center for Belgian Culture was created in 1963 out of the Federation of Belgian social clubs in our region of Illinois. During the mid-19th and early 20th centuries, many Belgian immigrants settled in the Quad Cities, which once boasted the largest Belgian community in the United States and still has the second highest Belgian heritage population in the country.

The Belgian community brought many great aspects of their culture to the Quad Cities, which the Center continues to promote through its art programs, lace-making classes and, of course, Belgian waffle breakfasts. Additionally, the Center assists with historical and genealogical research and provides scholarships for students of Belgian descent.

Mr. Speaker, I again want to congratulate the Center for Belgian Culture on this notable milestone, and I thank them for their many contributions to our community.

IN HONOR OF THE MONTEREY COUNTY HOSPITALITY ASSOCIATION

HON. SAM FARR

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mr. FARR. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Monterey County Hospitality Association on the occasion of its 25th annual hospitality employee recognition celebration. This is a truly remarkable event that recognizes just a few of the unsung heroes of America's number one industry.

As the co-chair of the congressional travel and tourism caucus, I frequently see the travel and tourism industry in terms of its big economics—generating \$2 trillion in revenues and supporting 14.6 million jobs. And indeed, it is crucial that national policy works to help travel and tourism thrive and benefit all of our communities.

But beneath these statistics are the people who work in the hotels, restaurants, rental car companies, and all the other myriad of visitor serving businesses. These men and women shape a visitor's experience and help them decide whether to return to the United States, to California, or to Monterey County. The place sells the first visit, but it's the hospitality employees that keep people coming back.

And that is why the Monterey County Hospitality Association event is so remarkable. I know of no other event of its size and scope where the regional travel and tourism industry comes together in such a comprehensive way to celebrate the extraordinary lengths that its employees go to make the visitor experience to the Monterey region the memory of a lifetime.

Each year colleagues nominate their co-workers for customer service that went above and beyond the ordinary call of duty—the maid who searched through the dumpster for a new bride's lost wedding ring, or a chef who recreated the menu from a couple's first date for their 50th wedding anniversary. From all of these nominees, a selection panel picks ten to receive an "Excellence in Hospitality" award.

The panel also singles out one of the awardees for special recognition for service that sets the gold standard. In 1988, this special award was given to Romulo "Papa Vince" Vicente, the renowned bar tender at Monterey's legendary Sardine Factory restaurant. And while the Sardine Factory's founders Ted Balestreri and Bert Cutino receive much of the public recognition for the Sardine Factory's success and the Monterey Bay hospitality renaissance that it helped spark, they will be the first to recognize that it was Papa Vince and employees like him that built the foundation of that success. So it is fitting that this top trophy has since been known as the Papa Vince award. It's people like Mr. Vicente who make the U.S. travel and tourism industry such a vital part of our national life and economy.

Mr. Speaker, I know I speak for the whole House in commending the Monterey County Hospitality Association on the occasion of this significant anniversary as well as extending our congratulations to the past, current, and future "Excellence in Hospitality" award winners.

HONORING REPRESENTATIVE
ISAAC "IKE" SKELTON IV

HON. PHIL GINGREY

OF GEORGIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mr. GINGREY of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, Isaac "Ike" Skelton was a consummate gentleman and a true class act. Ike was a humble man; he commonly referred to himself as a "country lawyer." He was a tireless champion of our service men and women, both on the battlefield and off. He loved his family and everyone who encountered him knew it. He served the people of Missouri for 34 years with dignity and grace, and he will be missed. In Congress, one often hears the phrase "my good friend" or "my friend across the aisle." Sometimes it can lose its meaning. But Ike and I had a close, personal friendship that extended far deeper than Washington's definition of one.

Ike and I served on the Armed Services Committee together for six years. During that time, in the context of our committee service, we talked often about military education, the roles and missions within our Armed Forces, and Ike's famous book list. I accompanied him to Warm Springs, Georgia, where he received polio treatment as a teenager. The Warm Springs Foundation held a special place in his heart, and he spoke of the lessons he learned there often.

In his farewell speech to the House of Representatives, he said: "... never let illness define you, never be limited by the expectations of others, never give up, and never stop working."

Ike exemplified that sentiment in everything he did.

Polio prevented him from serving our country in uniform, so he chose to serve members of our military instead. Ike used to say he looked at all of our troops as someone's son or daughter. To that end, he worked with Democrats and Republicans alike to improve life for our military men and women. In his position as both Chairman and Ranking Member of the Armed Services Committee, he fought to ensure our troops had the necessary training, equipment and support on the frontlines. He worked to improve military housing and other services for them here at home.

Several years ago, I had the privilege of attending the 8th and 1 Parade at the Marine Barracks in Washington, D.C., where Ike was the guest of honor. It rained heavily that night, but like always, it was tough to dampen Ike's spirits. I learned so much from Ike and I will truly miss him. Ike was a one-of-a-kind congressman, and this body would be far better off with more members of his caliber.

Our country has lost a statesman, his family has lost a husband and father, our military has lost a champion, and many of us he worked or served with have lost a friend.

HONORING THE FFA'S 2013 NATIONAL MODEL OF EXCELLENCE AWARD WINNER

HON. ADAM KINZINGER

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, November 12, 2013

Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Pontiac Chapter of the Future Farmers of America (FFA) for being named the 2013 Model of Excellence chapter during the Eighty-Sixth National FFA Convention in Louisville, Kentucky.

FFA Chapters across the country that receive national three-star ratings are eligible candidates for the National Model of Excellence Award. The National FFA Organization consists of 579,678 students in all fifty states that are a part of 7,570 local chapters, making the competition for this prestigious award extremely demanding. While the Pontiac Chapter excelled in community and school development, it was especially successful in the area

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